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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 12/02/09

INDEX:

- (1) MD Kitazawa anticipates U.S. request for more Afghan aid after President Obama announced new strategy (Nikkei)
- (2) U.S. impatient with Hatoyama administration's delay in making decision on Futenma relocation (Okinawa Times)
- (3) MD Kitazawa indicates need to coordinate with SDP, PNP on Futenma relocation issue (Jiji com)
- (4) Futenma Air Field relocation: Statement by Governor Hashimoto overturns premise that relocation of Futenma functions out of the prefecture would be difficult (Okinawa Times)
- (5) Coalition partners SDP, PNP "headache" for PM Hatoyama in Futenma relocation issue; efforts being made to prevent disintegration of coalition (Tokyo Shimbun)
- (6) Testimony acknowledging existence of secret Okinawa accord to give pressure for uncovering secret nuclear accord as well: Likely to affect discussion on review of diplomatic documents disclosure system (Nikkei)
- (7) Editorial: Truth revealed on history of secret accord (Tokyo Shimbun)
- (8) Editorial: Former Foreign Ministry bureau chiefs' testimony must be utilized to restore trust in diplomacy (Mainichi)
- (9) "Protocol" fading, ahead of international conference on global warming (Part 1) (Mainichi)

ARTICLES:

(1) MD Kitazawa anticipates U.S. request for more Afghan aid after President Obama announced new strategy

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Slightly abridged)
Evening, December 2, 2009

In light of U.S. President Barack Obama's announcement of a new strategy for Afghanistan, the government is stepping up the formulation of concrete proposals for additional Afghan aid, which it had pledged at the Japan-U.S. summit meeting in November. Japan's additional aid measures, consisting mainly of civilian aid, such as paying for the salaries of police officers and vocational training, are expected to total a maximum of 5 billion dollars over five years from 2009. Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa indicated on the morning of Dec. 2 that the U.S. side is expected to request additional aid.

Kitazawa gave a speech at the National Defense Academy in Yokosuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture, on the morning of Dec. 2. Commenting on the new U.S. strategy, he pointed out that "the Obama administration is concerned that Afghanistan may turn into another Vietnam or Iraq." He added, "There is a strong possibility that the U.S. may ask Japan for more aid."

In this connection, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano stressed at a news conference in the morning that "in addition to the 5 billion dollars in aid, we would like to collaborate closely with

TOKYO 00002757 002 OF 011

the U.S. and other concerned countries and actively cooperate for the stability and development of Afghanistan."

(2) U.S. impatient with Hatoyama administration's delay in making decision on Futenma relocation

OKINAWA TIMES (Page 2) (Full)
December 2, 2009

Shin Yoshida, member of "Futenma Adrift" series reporting team

Shortly before U.S. President Barack Obama's visit to Japan, a source knowledgeable about Japan-U.S. diplomacy smiled wryly and revealed that the U.S. government itself was skeptical about the working group for the relocation of the U.S. forces' Futenma Air Station that the two governments had just agreed to set up. He said: "It is alleged that the working group 'is a kabuki show and has no meaning'."

A "kabuki show" is the term used by the Wall Street Journal in an editorial in late October criticizing Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, asserting that "it doesn't sound like he's thought much about the alternatives." However, this source also explained: "The end of a kabuki show is known. (What Hatoyama is doing) is just a charade for implementing the current relocation plan."

The U.S. government has been applying pressure for a decision on the Futenma issue before the end of 2009.

The working group was created to paper over the gap between the two countries at the meeting between Hatoyama, who was yet to chart a course, and Obama. A Japanese government source said with self-derision: "The Ambassador is just a proxy of the secretaries of defense and state. The working group is for the sake of making a decision on relocation to Henoko."

In anticipation of a change of administration in Japan, the U.S. has been contacting senior Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) officials since late 2008. Members of the transition team and think tank researchers who came to Japan before the inauguration of the Obama administration argued that the implementation of the U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ) realignment plans is the most desirable option.

At the same time, the departments of state and defense briefed the

Obama administration on the USFJ realignment plans and prepared for the conclusion of the Guam Agreement. The above Japanese source says that State and Pentagon persuaded Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who thought "there is no need for such a big rush," and succeeded in having the agreement signed in February. Several sources explain that "many years have passed since the SACO (Special Action Committee on Okinawa), and the U.S. no longer has the energy to renegotiate." It was thought that persuading the new governments in Japan and the U.S. would be a much easier endeavor. These sources believe that the U.S. stepped up its efforts to persuade the Hatoyama administration based on such a line of reasoning.

After Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada indicated for the first time on Oct. 23 that he favored a proposal to integrate Futenma's functions with Kadena Air Base, U.S. Ambassador to Japan John Roos, USFJ Commander Edward Rice, and other U.S. officials visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Oct. 29 and 30. They explained that: "The security environment has changed in the 13 years after SACO. With

TOKYO 00002757 003 OF 011

the rapid buildup of Chinese air power, it will be difficult to adopt the Kadena integration plan."

It is said that after a month of discussions, the U.S. side is becoming convinced that "the Kadena option will be abandoned sooner or later because it is not feasible. The DPJ is no different from the Liberal Democratic Party after all."

However, it appears that the U.S. side is still worried because "the DPJ's policymaking process is unclear. What is Hatoyama really thinking?" Another source knowledgeable about Japan-U.S. diplomacy is visibly impatient. He says: "There are growing expectations in Okinawa for (Futenma's) relocation out of the prefecture or out of Japan. We hope for an early solution."

(3) MD Kitazawa indicates need to coordinate with SDP, PNP on Futenma relocation issue

JIIJI.COM (Full)
13:26, December 2, 2009

Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa gave a speech at the National Defense Academy in Yokosuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture, on the morning of Dec. 2. Discussing the relocation of the U.S. forces' Futenma Air Station (in Ginowan City, Okinawa), he said: "While I hope that there will be a solution before the end of the year, the Hatoyama administration is a coalition government of three parties. I wonder if breaking up the coalition and triggering political confusion would be in Japan's interest," indicating that coordination with the Social Democratic Party and the People's New Party, which demand the relocation of Futenma out of Okinawa, is indispensable.

Kitazawa also said: "I don't think the Japan-U.S. relationship will become extremely unstable even if a solution isn't reached by the end of the year."

Regarding the schedule of the bilateral working group on the Futenma issue, Kitazawa said: "Working level discussions will take place on Dec. 4, and this can be upgraded to the ministerial level if necessary."

(4) Futenma Air Field relocation: Statement by Governor Hashimoto overturns premise that relocation of Futenma functions out of the prefecture would be difficult

OKINAWA TIMES (Page 2) (Excerpts)
December 2, 2009

(Commentary)

Concerning the issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station, Osaka Governor Toru Hashimoto said, "If we receive a proposal from the government, we in the Kansai region will do our utmost to come up with a plan." This statement by the governor has overturned the premise adopted by the past administrations, which

cited the lack of other possible relocation sites outside the prefecture as one reason for regarding the relocation of the Futenma facilities outside the prefecture as difficult.

In the process of the U.S. Forces Japan realignment talks, former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi once said, "It is all right to

TOKYO 00002757 004 OF 011

consider relocating facilities outside the prefecture or the nation" (October, 2004) However, he withdrew this view less than a year later under the banner that local governments were reluctant to accept the Futenma functions. He said, "Many municipalities are in favor of my view as a general argument but against it when it comes to specifics. They all view the facilities as an unwelcome stranger."

Among ministers of the present administration, those who are in favor of relocation within the prefecture cite the time needed to find an alternative site as a reason for that. Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, for instance, said, "There is (no option for) relocating outside the prefecture, since the amount of time available is limited."

The people of Okinawa are dissatisfied that there is no indication that the government has sounded out or held talks with municipalities outside Okinawa Prefecture about whether they would accept the Futenma facilities in order to reduce the burden of Okinawa. Hashimoto made the above statement in response to a question asked by reporters. He said, "The government has never consulted me on the matter."

It is not clear whether he made the statement with the acceptance of a helicopter unit in mind or he was referring to the transfer of F-15 fighter drills from Kadena Air Base following the integration (of the Futenma facilities) into it. It remains to be seen whether the Hashimoto statement will directly lead to the relocation of the Futenma functions outside the prefecture.

However, concerning the excessive concentration of U.S. military bases in Okinawa, Hashimoto said, "The people must be aware of the situation and some municipality must accept (the Futenma functions)."

(5) Coalition partners SDP, PNP "headache" for PM Hatoyama in Futenma relocation issue; efforts being made to prevent disintegration of coalition

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Full)
December 2, 2009

Koki Miura

How to handle the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the People's New Party (PNP) is now a headache for Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama in dealing with the issue of the relocation of the U.S. forces' Futenma Air Station (in Ginowan City, Okinawa). The foreign and defense ministries are working for a solution based on the current plan to relocate the Futenma base to the coastal area of Camp Schwab in Nago City before the end of 2009, but the SDP is poised to oppose relocation within Okinawa, hinting at the possibility of breaking away from the coalition. The Prime Minister, who is focused on the U.S. and Okinawa in responding to this issue, finds himself in distress in his own "home ground."

Hatoyama met with Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada and Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa at the Prime Minister's Official Residence on Dec. 1 to discuss the Futenma issue. They agreed that the coalition's disintegration should be avoided at all costs. In late afternoon Hatoyama spoke to reporters. "We are also considering how the other parties are thinking," emphasizing that consideration is

TOKYO 00002757 005 OF 011

being given to the SDP and the PNP.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano also stated at a news conference that "the three parties coming to an agreement is an absolutely necessary process," indicating that a decision will be made based on an agreement among three parties.

In connection with the Futenma issue, SDP leader Mizuho Fukushima demanded at the Ministerial Committee on Basic Policies on Nov. 30 the creation of a working group for three-party consultations. "All options should be looked into," she angrily said during a press conference on Dec. 1. "Simply accepting the previous administration's agreement is unacceptable."

The SDP's goal is to prolong the debate in an attempt to block Futenma's relocation within Okinawa. For Fukushima, this issue is also significant because official declaration of candidacy for the election of the SDP's leader is scheduled for Dec. 4. She is seeking a fourth term. Fukushima had just been criticized at a meeting of SDP members of both houses of the Diet on Nov. 27 for being "soft" on the Futenma issue. A senior party official warns that "if the party compromises here, this will directly lead to bolting from the coalition and even affect the very survival of the party."

The PNP, which includes senior party officials elected from Okinawa, is falling in step with the SDP. PNP leader Shizuka Kamei made remarks in support of the SDP at the Ministerial Committee meeting on Nov. 30. He said: "If a decision is not made by the three parties together, the SDP will break away. The government should impress upon the U.S. that the matter can't be settled by it and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs alone."

Meanwhile, Okada and Kitazawa are taking steps to prepare for making a decision based on the current relocation plan before the end of the year. The Japan-U.S. cabinet level working group is expected to hold its second meeting this week at the earliest. Okada will make another visit to Okinawa on Dec. 4 and 5 to hear the Okinawan people's opinions. There is speculation in the ruling parties that the government may make a decision as soon as Dec. 7 after Okada's visit to Okinawa.

"In that case," Ministry of Defense officials say, "coordination among the parties will be important. Someone who can play this role should step forward." They are beginning to voice hopes that Democratic Party of Japan Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa will do so.

(6) Testimony acknowledging existence of secret Okinawa accord to give pressure for uncovering secret nuclear accord as well: Likely to affect discussion on review of diplomatic documents disclosure system

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
December 2, 2009

Bunroku Yoshino, a former director general of the North American Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), has

formally acknowledged the existence of a secret accord concerning the reversion of Okinawa to Japan. This will likely affect the investigation into Japan-U.S. secret accords on nuclear introduction into Japan and the way diplomatic documents are disclosed.

TOKYO 00002757 006 OF 011

The secret Okinawa accord, the target of the lawsuit this time, is one of the four secret accords the subject of a probe by the blue-ribbon panel (chaired by Tokyo University Professor Shinichi Kitaoka), established by Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada. The existence of another secret accord, which stipulates that the U.S. military can bring nuclear weapons into Japan in the event of emergency after the reversion of Okinawa without nuclear weapons, has also been pointed out.

Yoshino's testimony is a powerful document for the investigation into the secret accord. It will help pressure the government to investigate further. Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama on Dec. 1 told reporters: "It is a precious testimony. The government is now

confirming the facts. As soon as the matter is confirmed, I would like to let the people know about it."

Some have pointed out that Yoshino's testimony could affect the ongoing discussion on the U.S. Forces Japan realignment plan. The Liberal Democratic Party-New Komeito administration decided to shoulder the cost of the transfer of about 8,000 U.S. Marines stationed in Okinawa. However, voices skeptical about the need for Japan to shoulder such a cost are deep rooted. Of the transfer cost totaling 10.27 billion dollars, Japan will disburse 6.09 billion dollars, including loans. However, the size of the actual transfer and details of the building of facilities in Guam are unclear.

The testimony will also likely accelerate discussions for reviewing Japan's diplomatic documents disclosure system. The expert committee intends to propose improving the application of the system.

Like the U.S., the Japanese government, in principle, discloses diplomatic documents that have been in custody more than 30 years. However, the propriety of doing so is relegated to MOFA to determine on its own. Relevant bureaus, such as the North American Affairs Bureau, determine whether to disclose such documents or not. There is strong criticism that MOFA has desired to conceal those documents. There is also a pattern of MOFA bureaucrats' keeping secret accords in an unbroken line, as there had been no change in the government for a long period of time, and controlling diplomacy toward the U.S.

In the U.S., there is a bureau exclusively responsible for disclosing administrative documents. It adopts a mechanism of screening concerned documents from a third-party's standpoint. Procedures are speedier than in Japan. Documents control books are also consolidated.

(7) Editorial: Truth revealed on history of secret accord

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 5) (Full)
December 2, 2009

A former Foreign Ministry bureau chief testified in court yesterday that he signed documents on a secret agreement on the reversion of Okinawa to Japanese administration. The meaning behind his testimony is deeply significance. The national government, which has denied the existence of the secret accord, will likely be forced to change its official stance. The Japanese public is not convinced that the historical truth should remain hidden.

Bunroku Yoshino, the former Foreign Ministry bureau chief in

TOKYO 00002757 007 OF 011

question, admitted in the Tokyo District Court to the existence of the Okinawa secret accord, saying, "The words in the official Okinawa reversion accord and the facts are different." With regard to the documents declassified by the U.S. side, which disclosed the existence of the Okinawa secret deal, he said, "I signed the documents at my director general's office."

The documents stipulated Japan's payment of 4 million dollars in costs for restoring returned military base land to its original state, which the United States was actually supposed to bear.

Yoshino took the witness stand in a lawsuit filed by former Mainichi Shimbun reporter Takichi Nishiyama and other plaintiffs asking the government to disclose secret documents. All the more because the national government has consistently said that there is no secret accord, the testimony at a public occasion by the person who signed the documents is significant. It is inevitable that the government's accountability for the secret documents will be harshly questioned.

Yoshino's testimony might also be a clue to exposing a secret. This is because there are apparently still some hidden secrets regarding the reversion of Okinawa to Japanese administration. For example, it has been said that although the Japanese side concluded an agreement that it would shoulder 320 million dollars for the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, the total amount Japan paid to the United States was far higher than that amount.

Of the expenditures in the secret accord, 65 million dollars is said to be the origin of the Japan's current host nation support (or the so-called sympathy budget) for the U.S. forces in Japan. Therefore, the secret document issue is a problem linking to the present day. However, these facts have been disclosed by the U.S. side's diplomatic documents. Because the Japanese government has continued to conceal such facts, the Japanese people have not known anything about them.

In the Foreign Ministry, a committee of experts has started examining a nuclear secret agreement. However, the Finance Ministry has not yet revealed its documents on the Okinawa secret. If the documents are disclosed, our national interests will no longer be damaged. We want the central government to shed light on the whole picture of the secret pact by quickly examining and disclosing the documents.

At the time when Okinawa was returned to Japanese administration, Nishiyama was arrested for and convicted of obtaining a secret official telegram by tempting a Foreign Ministry employee. In the Tokyo District Court 37 years ago, Yoshino offered a false testimony that there was no secret agreement. In the court yesterday, Yoshino approached Nishiyama and they shook hands. This scene reveals how relieved Yoshino felt at disclosing the truth for the sake of future generations.

How did the government of Prime Minister Eisaku Sato carry out negotiations with Washington on the reversion of Okinawa to Japan? As the people involved in the negotiations gradually begin to leave us behind, future generations will be unable to make judgments unless important records in Japan's postwar history are disclosed. The new administration is faced with the challenge of disclosing the truth behind the Okinawa secret accord, which was concluded under the Liberal Democratic Party governments.

TOKYO 00002757 008 OF 011

(8) Editorial: Former Foreign Ministry bureau chiefs' testimony must be utilized to restore trust in diplomacy

MAINICHI (Page 5) (Full)
December 2, 2009

Bunroku Yoshino, a former Foreign Ministry American Bureau chief who had held talks with the United States on the 1972 reversion of Okinawa, admitted for the first time in court yesterday the existence of a secret deal with the United States. The testimony by the former high-ranking government official, who served as a top negotiator, carries great significance. The Hatoyama cabinet must utilize this valuable testimony to restore trust in Japanese diplomacy.

Yoshino made the statement in a lawsuit filed by a group of individuals, including former Mainichi Shimbun reporter Takichi Nishiyama, who are demanding the government disclose documents pertaining to the alleged secret pact. The plaintiffs are calling for the disclosure of documents specifying that Japan was to shoulder the costs of restoring land in Okinawa, which was supposed to be paid by the United States, and of moving the relay station of Voice of America (VOA), U.S. shortwave overseas radio broadcast, out of Japan.

Taking the witness stand on behalf of the plaintiffs, Yoshino admitted that he had signed in the Foreign Ministry director-general's office a document (written in English) promising that Japan would shoulder 4 million dollars (1.2 billion yen at the exchange rate during that time) to restore land in Okinawa to its original state, adding that then Foreign Minister Kiichi Aichi was also aware of it. "I think the memorandum in English was appropriately preserved and discarded later because it was unnecessary (for the Japanese side)," Yoshino said. He further admitted that he had also signed a document pertaining to Japan's payment (16 million dollars) for the relocation of the VOA relay station.

The state has repeatedly insisted that those documents were not final agreements, but the current government has yet to clarify where it stands on the matter -- possibly in view of the verification of the secret agreements by the Foreign Ministry's experts' panel.

In any case, the government should have changed its stance much earlier. Many documents proving the existence of the Japan-U.S. secret agreement on the revision of Okinawa have been found in the United States since 1998. In interviews given in February 2006 to the Mainichi Shimbun and other media outlets, Yoshino admitted the existence of the secret deal for the first time as a former top Japanese negotiator.

Despite that, the former administration led by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) consistently denied the existence of the secret pact. Above all, this pact is connected with talks on payments associated with the reversion of Okinawa. The weak reasoning behind the calculation is also being called into question. The deal can be described as a dual betrayal of the people.

Under the Civil Proceedings Law, even an ex-civil servant cannot take the witness stand without the approval of the agency where he/she used to work. If the LDP was still in power, Yoshino would

TOKYO 00002757 009 OF 011

not have been able to testify in court. (Yoshino's testimony) is one positive effect of the change of administration.

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama said on Yoshino's testimony: "It is one valuable testimony. After the facts are verified, the government wants to let the people know about them." We want to see the government totally uncover the facts about the secret deal based on this testimony.

"Attempts to distort history are disadvantageous to the people," Yoshino said in a press conference. "The United States has disclosed official documents. I think this practice will be beneficial." The current system in which the Foreign Ministry can arbitrarily decide on whether or not to disclose diplomatic documents is also in need of drastic review.

(9) "Protocol" fading, ahead of international conference on global warming (Part 1)

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Excerpts)
December 2, 2009

U.S., China struggling for leadership in setting target for greenhouse gas emissions cuts; Japan may be left behind

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP15) will open in Copenhagen, Denmark, on Dec. 7. Attention is being focused on whether a significant political agreement will be reached in preparation for introducing a new international framework to reduce greenhouse gas emissions beyond the timeframe set in the Kyoto Protocol. Under such a situation, a battle for leadership is intensifying as the U.S. and China announced in succession their targets to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

Early in the morning of Nov. 27 - the day after the U.S. and China announced their commitments, Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada urgently called cabinet ministers in the Diet Building. Environment Minister Sakhito Ozawa proudly said: "Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's speech at the UN general assembly prompted the U.S. and China to come up with commitments and enabled Japan to take the leadership." Participants also decided to consider later what approach Japan should take in the international conference. As it stands, there was no sense of urgency detected in the meeting.

The U.S. announced its target of reducing emissions by 17 PERCENT from 2005 levels by 2020, but if this figure is calculated on the basis of 1990 levels, it is less than 4 PERCENT. China's target could lead to remarkably increasing its gas emissions. Even so, the international community has welcomed the policy switch of these two largest gas emitters, which had refused to present any numerical

targets. For this policy change, the U.S. and China reportedly made arrangements in a package agreement on a tie-up in the energy area reached in their summit meeting in Beijing in November. An international negotiation source said: "The U.S. and China also prearranged their reduction targets in the meeting."

In the UN assembly in September, Hatoyama announced Japan's ambitious goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 25 PERCENT compared with 1990 levels as an international pledge. The prime minister appeared to have led the international community at that time. But Japan has been toyed with by prearrangements by the U.S. and China.

TOKYO 00002757 010 OF 011

"The world's emissions should be halved by 2050." This passage was dropped from the joint declaration issued in winding up the summit meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum despite the Japanese government's call. This passage had been inserted in the draft declaration. One negotiator explained: "China voiced opposition to the last." That nation also succeeded in having its requests, including the transfer of technology to emerging countries, included in the declaration. The U.S. has also decided to dispatch seven minister-level officials to the COP15. A Japanese negotiator grumbled: "The U.S. will hijack the COP."

"There is no negotiating card left for Japan," said Akihiro Sawa, senior executive fellow of the 21st Century Public Policy Institute. Other countries have secured a free hand to be able to change their numerical targets depending on circumstances, but he says, "Japan, which has announced a fixed ambitious figure, cannot take a flexible stance (only with 25 PERCENT) in negotiations."

An aide to Hatoyama said in a low voice on Nov. 26: "The prime minister has just begun to study the issue." Japan once led the world, but a government source is concerned that "if Japan cannot obtain information, it might be left out." There is even this indication that because information has not been provided to Japan, a sense of urgency was not detected in the emergency meeting on Nov. 27."

Projects to promote emissions trading also subject to review; road map for 25 PERCENT target yet to be prepared

In the budget-screening session on Nov. 25, the Government Revitalization Unit, chaired by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, decided to put off or scrap budgetary allocations for seven projects to promote measures to contain global warming, including one to disseminate the emissions trading system across the nation. In the screening session on the 26th, a senior Environment Ministry official vented to a senior Finance Ministry official who was sitting next to him: "If these projects are scrapped, it will be impossible for Japan to achieve the 25 PERCENT target."

The panel also decided to put off the budgetary allocation for developing smart grid technology - the next-generation power transmission network -- proposed by the Environment Ministry. This is a core technology in fighting global warming and was included in the action program on clean energy technology cooperation, which was agreed on in the latest Japan-U.S. summit held about two weeks ago.

The Hatoyama administration has pledged to take every possible measure to achieve the 25 PERCENT -reduction goal, but a senior Environment Ministry official grumbled: "His words and deeds are inconsistent."

Japan Iron and Steel Federation Chairman Shoji Muneoka told Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Masayuki Naoshima in their meeting on Nov. 25: "I ask you not to agree on a mechanism that excludes the U.S. and China." Cooperation from the steel industry, which has generated the largest volume of greenhouse gases, is absolutely necessary, but the chairman has complained that the Hatoyama administration's public pledge "will undermine the nation's competitiveness in the international market," and "The federation is against the target."

TOKYO 00002757 011 OF 011

As its guidelines for gas emission cuts from 1990 levels, the International Energy Agency (IEA) suggested 10 PERCENT for Japan, 3 PERCENT for the U.S., and 23 PERCENT for Europe. A senior IEA member commented: "Japan's 25 PERCENT is too high."

A UN executive praised Japan's 25 PERCENT reduction target, saying: "We will push negotiations forward," but a road map for this target is still nowhere in sight.

ROOS